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Message Text

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ACTION SCS-06

INFO OCT-01 EA-12 ISO-00 SSO-00 PA-02 /021 W
----------121294 050725Z /11
O 050702Z MAR 78
FM USLO PEKING
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0033
INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS PEKING 0575

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: CDES CH (HOLMES, FRANK A.)

SUBJ: DEATH OF US CITIZEN IN PRC (PPT UNAVAILABLE

REF: PEKING 574

1. US CITIZEN, FRANK A. HOLMES DIED YESTERDAY (MARCH 4, 1978) MOARNING AT 0720 HRS OF A CEREBRAL STROKE AT THE TUNG FANG HOTEL IN CANTON. PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA. HOLMES HAD JUST COMPLETED A TWO-WEEK TOUR OF THE PRC IN A GROUP SPONSORED BY THE US-CHINA PEOPLE'S FRIENDSHIP ASSOCIATION. USLO HAS BEEN IN CONTACT WITH MR. DAVID GUNNELL, TOUR LEADER, WHO ADVISES THAT THE FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS ARE BEING HANDLED DIRECTLY BY THE USCPFA AND THE CHINESE.

2. MR. HOLMES' STROKE OCCURRED AFTER ABOUT 90 MINUTES OF DIZZINESS AND NAUSEA WHILE US DOCTORS, ALSO MEMBERS OF THE TOUR GROUP, ATTEMPTED TO TREAT HIM. MR. HOLMES DIED INSTANTLY AND PAINLESSLY AT0720 HRS. THE TOUR GROUP LEADER, MR. DAVID GUNNELL, APPROVED AN AUTOPSY WHICH WAS CONDUCTED BY CHINESE PHYSICIANS AND CONFIRMED THE DIAGNOSIS OF THE US DOCTORS. THE CHINESE AUTOPSY REPORT SAID THAT, IN ADDITION TO THE STROKE
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CAUSED BY A BLOOD CLOT IN THE "LATERAL CEREBRUM", THE FOUND "HARDENING OF THE ARTERIES THROUGHOUT THE BODY".

3. MR. GUNNELL IMMEDIATELY NOTIFIED THE NATIONAL OFFICE OF THE US-CHINA PEOPLE'S FRIENDSHIP ASSN, WHICH PASSED NEWS OF THE DEATH TO MRS. ANNA HOLMES, WIFE OF THE DECEASED. MRS. HOLMES PHONED GUNNELL IN CANTON DIRECTING THAT THE REMAINS BE

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CREMATED AND THE ASHES LEFT IN CHINA. SHE CONFIRMED THIS
IN A FOLLOW-UP CABLE TO GUNNELL.

4. THE CREMATION TOOK PLACE THIS MORNING (MARCH 5, 1978) AFTER
AN IMPRESSIVE AND MOVING MEMORIAL SERVICE. THE SERVICE WAS
WELL-ATTENDED BY "LEADING MEMBERS" OF THE CANTON CITY AND
KWANGTUNG PROVINCE FOREIGN AFFAIRS DEPARTMENTS. A MOVING EULOGY
WAS DELIVERED BY THE "LEADING MEMBER" OF THE CANTON BRANCH
OF THE CHINA INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL SERVICE WHO SAID THAT
MR. HOLMES WAS PARTICIPATING IN A TOUR WHICH
HAD "GREAT MEANING IN THE FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN THE US AND
CHINESE PEOPLES". AFTER THE EULOGY,
THEY VIEWED THE REMAINS WHICH BORE
LITTLE EVIDENCE OF THE EXTENSIVE AUTOPSY. THE REMAINS WERE
THEN TRANSPORTED TO THE CREMATORIUM FOR CREMATION.

5. MR. GUNNELL SAID THAT THE CHINESE TOOK GREAT CARE IN PREPARING
A TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEMORIAL SERVICE EVEN GOING TO THE EXTENT
OF HAVING MR. HOLMES' PASSPORT PHOTOGRAPH BLOWN UP TO POSTER SIZE AND
WREATHING IN FLOWERS. THE CHINESE TRAVEL SERVICE ALSO
HAD A PHOTOGRAPHER ON HAND WHO TOOK SEVERAL PHOTOS. GUNNELL
SAID HE PLANS TO PERSONALLY DELIVER THE PHOTOS TO MRS.
HOLMES IMMEDIATELY UPON HIS RETURN TO THE US.

6. MR. GUNNEL BELIEVES THAT MRS. ANNA HOLMES MAY PREFER TO
SPEAK TO A SPANISH-SPEAKING DEPARTMENT OFFICER, IF ONE IS
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AVAILABLE, SHOULD SHE HAVE ANY QUESTIONS NOT ANSWERED
IN REFTEL. HOLMES' TELEPHONE IS (213) 365-4503.
WOODCOCK

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 05 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978PEKING00575
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780100-0028
Format: TEL
From: PEKING
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t197803105/aaaadlea.tel
Line Count: 97
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 003f7bb8-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SCS
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 PEKING 574
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 06 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3113065
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DEATH OF US CITIZEN IN PRC (PPT UNAVAILABLE
TAGS: CDES, CH, (HOLMES, FRANK A)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/003f7bb8-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
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